

Message Text

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E. O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: ELAB ILO BF

SUBJ: BAHAMIAN UNIONS ATTENDING ILO CONFERENCE

1. REPRESENTATIVES OF TWO BAHAMIAN UNIONS ARE IN GENEVA TO ATTEND ANNUAL ILO CONFERENCE, BUT GCOB, WHICH IS ELIGIBLE FOR FIRST TIME TO MORE THAN OBSERVER STATUS, HAS SHIED AWAY FROM MEETING.

2. THREE REPRESENTATIVES OF BAHAMAS HOTEL AND CATERING WORKERS UNION ARE LED BY VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS BASTIAN. UNION PRESIDENT DAVID KNOWLES WHO ATTENDED 1972 ILO MEETING, CURRENTLY IS ENGAGED IN TRYING TO RESOLVE A LABOR DISPUTE ARISING OUT OF THE FIRING AND LAYING OFF OF OVER 275 HOTEL WORKERS BY HOTELS CLOSING OR CUTTING BACK OPERATIONS OVER THE SUMMER SEASON.

3. DUDLEY WILLIAMS IS HEADING BAHAMAS ENGINEERING FUEL SERVICE AND ALLIED WORKERS UNION DELEGATION. (WILLIAMS REFERS TO HIS UNION AS THE ENGINEERING AND GENERAL WORKERS UNION, BUT CHANGE OF NAME IS NOT RECOGNIZED BY GCOB WHICH HAS POLICY OF RESTRICTING UNIONS TO NARROW EMPLOYMENT FIELDS). WILLIAMS IS MOST OUTSPOKEN CRITIC OF GCOB LABOR POLICY AND OF THE GOVERNMENT'S FAILURE TO IMPROVE ECONOMY.

4. UNION REPRESENTATIVES PROBABLY WILL TRY TO ENLIST ILO SUPPORT FOR THEIR VIEW THAT CURRENT GOVERNMENT POLICY AND PARTIC-

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ULARLY 1970 INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT RUN COUNTER TO ILO PRE-

CEPTS. GCOB'S DECISION NOT TO ATTEND THE ILO MEETING WAS
TAKEN PRIOR TO ONSET OF THE CURRENT HOTEL LABOR DISPUTES AND
MAY REFLECT LABOR MINISTRY DESIRE NOT TO HEAR CRITICISM AT
ILO SESSION OR FEEL CONSTRAINED TO REPLY TO IT.
SPIERS

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